



LIAISONS IN THE AOC

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Depending on the nature of the operation, the [commander, Air Force forces](#) (COMAFFOR), may have a number of [liaison](#) teams and liaison officers (LNOs) within the [air operations center](#) (AOC) to facilitate planning and execution among the other components in the joint force.

Component Liaisons. Component liaisons work for their respective component commanders and with the COMAFFOR and staff. Each component normally provides liaison elements that work within the AOC and [AFFOR staff](#). These liaison elements consist of experienced specialists who provide component planning and tasking expertise and coordination capabilities. They help integrate, coordinate, and deconflict their component's participation in joint air component operations. The air component may require other liaison augmentation to support AOC functions such as Coast Guard, Defense Intelligence Agency, National Security Agency, Central Intelligence Agency, National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, Air Force ISR Agency, National Reconnaissance Office, and Federal Aviation Administration in various operational and support areas.

Battlefield Coordination Detachment (BCD). The BCD supports integration of air component operations with Army operations. BCD personnel are integrated into AOC divisions to support planning; operations; [air defense](#); [intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance](#); [airlift](#); [logistics](#); [airspace control](#); and communications. In particular, the BCD coordinates ground force priorities, requests, and items of interest. One of the BCD's most important functions is to coordinate boundary line and [fire support coordination line](#) changes and timing. The BCD provides ground [order of battle](#) (both friendly and enemy) situational awareness and expertise into the AOC and normally briefs the ground situation/intelligence update. The BCD may also provide current ground situation inputs to AOC teams for incorporation into daily briefings and intelligence summaries.

Naval and Amphibious Liaison Element (NALE). The NALE personnel from the maritime components support the AOC in integrating naval air, naval fires, and [amphibious operations](#) into theater air operations and monitor and interpret the maritime battle situation for the AOC. When required, the NALE brings maritime order of battle (both friendly and enemy) situational awareness and provides update and intelligence briefings. The NALE may also provide input to AOC teams for incorporation into daily briefings and intelligence summaries.

Marine Liaison Element (MARLE). MARLEs are representatives of the commander, Marine Forces (COMMARFOR) and the associated aviation combat element commander. The MARLEs support the COMAFFOR in integrating Marine air-ground task force (MAGTF) fires, maneuver, and Marine air into the theater campaign and supporting [joint air operations plan](#). This team should be well versed in the MAGTF commander's guidance, intentions, schemes of maneuver, and direct support aviation plan.

Special Operations Liaison Element (SOLE). The [joint force special operations component commander](#) (JFSOCC) provides a SOLE to the COMAFFOR (or appropriate Service component air command and control facility). The SOLE coordinates, synchronizes, and deconflicts SOF air and surface operations within the [area of responsibility](#) through the [air tasking order](#) and [airspace control order](#). The SOLE chief, serving as the JFSOCC's representative to the COMAFFOR, places LNOs throughout the AOC staff.

Coalition/Allied LNOs. LNOs representing coalition/allied surface forces may improve AOC situational awareness regarding the disposition of friendly forces, especially when those forces do not have a mature theater air control system. They are also essential for [unity of effort](#) for coalition air defense operations and airspace deconfliction. When teamed with linguists, they can help overcome language barriers with remote allied/coalition forces. In force projection scenarios into an immature theater, AOC directors should anticipate the need for LNOs and actively seek them out via the JFC staff, in-country military group, staff country team, or direct contact with coalition forces, if necessary.
